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THE PREPARATION OF MODERN-FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHERS.

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THIS 1962-63 SURVEY MADE BY THE MODERN LANGUAGE
ASSOCIATION COVERS SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN 33 STATES AND THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. TWO TABLES, ONE FOR PUBLIC AND ONE FOR
PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS, GIVE STATE AND NATIONAL FIGURES FOR THE
NUMBER OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS, TEACHING LOAD,
THE EXTENT OF THEIR ACADEMIC PREPARATION, THE NUMBER TEACHING
TWO LANGUAGES, AVERAGE CLASS SIZE, PROPORTION OF TEACHING
TIME DEVOTED TO LANGUAGES, AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE.
PERCENTAGES ON PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY SHOW HOW MANY
PARTICIPATE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ORGANIZATIONS, CONFERENCES,
NDEA INSTITUTES, FOREIGN TRAVEL, AND SUMMER STUDY, AND THOSE
WHO SUBSCRIBE TO A FOREIGN LANGUAGE JOURNAL. A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS. THIS
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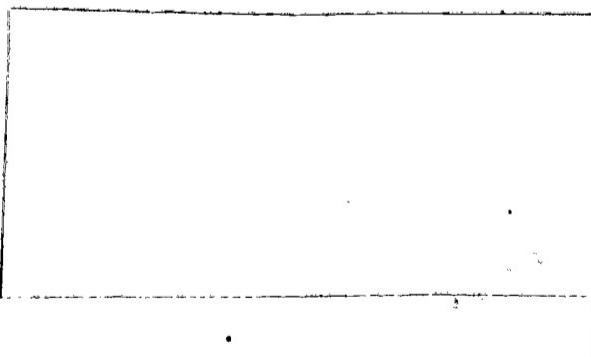
THE PREPARATION OF MODERN-FOREIGN- LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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The Preparation of Modern-Foreign-Language Teachers

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THE MLA has completed a survey of the academic preparation and teaching experience, the teaching load, and the present degree of professional involvement of secondary-school teachers of modern foreign languages. Prototype for the survey was one made by Robert P. Serafino in the spring of 1961¹ when he was Foreign Language Consultant in the Connecticut State Department of Education. We tried to involve all the other states in a national survey and succeeded in getting thirty-three states and the District of Columbia to participate. Costs of the survey were borne in part by a grant from The Carnegie Corporation. The questionnaires were mailed out and the basic data were tabulated by the various state FL supervisors or their delegates, and we are glad here to express again our thanks to them: Mrs. Joanna Breedlove Hall, Alabama, Robert L. Thomas, Alaska, Miss Wilma Jimerson, Arkansas, Miss Dorothy D. Duhon, Colorado, Miss Annette H. Emgarth, Delaware, Paul T. Garrett, Washington, D.C., O. E. Pérez, Florida, Miss Marjorie A. Boyd, Idaho, Ermal E. Garinger, Kansas, Roy G. Smith, Kentucky, Mrs. Rae S. Rettig, Louisiana, Edward F. Booth, Maine, Robert M. Bassford, Maryland, James R. Powers, Massachusetts, Jermaine D. Arendt, Minnesota, Ralph M. Siverio, Mississippi, Lester W. McKim, Montana, Floyd A. Miller, Nebraska, Philip D. Smith, Jr., Nevada,

F. André Paquette, New Hampshire, Henry W. Pascual, New Mexico, Mrs. Tora T. Ladu, North Carolina, Kiaran L. Dooley, North Dakota, Miss Leona Glenn, Ohio, Mrs. Patricia Hammond, Oklahoma, Berton M. Bailey, Oregon, Elizabeth Newton, Pennsylvania, Eugene M. Anderson, South Carolina, J. Dale Miller, Utah, Miss Marianne C. Ciotti, Vermont, George A. Fenley, Jr., West Virginia, Frank M. Grittner, Wisconsin, Cecil M. Shaw, Wyoming. Our special gratitude goes to James Eshelman of our research staff, who checked the returns from each state and computed and tabulated the national per cents. The present report is merely a record of his accomplishment.

The survey was begun in the academic year 1962-63, but some states were unable to process their returns until late in 1963, with a consequent postponement in the tabulation of the national figures. Questionnaires were sent to 14,386 public-secondary-school teachers in the 33 states and the District of Columbia and to 1805 independent- and parochial-school teachers in 26 states and the District of Columbia. The per cent of response was 78.4 for the public-school teachers and 79.3 for the non-public-school teachers. Complete returns were

¹ "Survey of Modern-Foreign-Language Teachers in Connecticut," *Reports of Surveys and Studies in the Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages*, New York: MLA, 1961, pp. 281-284.

obtained in Alaska (non-public), Delaware (public), District of Columbia (public), Idaho (non-public), Kentucky (public), Maryland (public and non-public), Mississippi (non-public), Montana (public and non-public), Nevada (public), Pennsylvania (non-public), and Utah (public and non-public).

Table A summarizes the significant data about MFL teachers in the public schools. Over two thirds (69.0%) of their teaching time is devoted to MFLs. The highest degree of concentration is in Massachusetts (86.2%), Maryland (80.3%), Delaware (79.2%), Pennsylvania (77.8%), Colorado (76.7%), New Hampshire (76.4%), and Florida (75.1%).

The average MFL class has 26.2 pupils. Lowest state averages are Kansas with 18 and Maine with 19. Averages of over 30: Idaho, 33.4, Florida, 34, District of Columbia, 35, Montana, 36.5, Indiana, 39, and Alabama, 40.

The per cent of MFL teachers that teach more than one MFL averages 11.7. States with the highest percentage in this respect are Massachusetts (20.7), Delaware (21.8), District of Columbia (23.7), Wyoming (23.9), and Indiana (28.0). States with the smallest per cent of teachers of two languages: Arkansas (3.0), Maine (1.6), Vermont (0.9), and Alaska (0.0).

Almost all (99.2%) of the MFL teachers have the bachelor's degree and 29.9% have the master's degree, with a range from Indiana's 61.0% to Pennsylvania's 12.8%. In terms of the number of semester hours of preparation in the major MFL, the District of Columbia is clearly in the lead, with only 1.1% of the teachers with fewer than 17 semester hours, 3.2% with 17 to 24 semester hours, and 77.4% with over 30 semester hours. States in which more than half the MFL teachers have over 30 semester hours: Massachusetts (50.6%), Delaware (51.3%), Maryland (54.5%), New Hampshire (55.6%), New Mexico (57.2%), Indiana (58.6%), and Utah (66.3%). The national averages were 11.3% of the teachers with fewer than 17 semester hours, 25.2% with 17 to 24, 18.7% with 25 to 30, and 44.8% with more than 30.

Teachers are naturally less well prepared in their second MFL. The national averages were 22.7% with fewer than 17 semester hours, 36.3% with 17 to 24, 16.2% with 25 to 30, and 24.9% with more than 30. State by state com-

parisons are somewhat unreliable because of the small numbers of teachers involved in teaching two MFLs in some states.

The average number of years of MFL teaching experience is a surprisingly low 7.7. State averages below 5 years: Idaho (4.9), Arkansas and North Dakota (4.8), and Alaska (4.0). State averages of over 10 years: Massachusetts (10.1), Maine (10.2), North Carolina (10.4), District of Columbia (11.7), New Hampshire (15.4), and Vermont (21.0).

The amount of professional activity varies widely from state to state. Slightly over a quarter (25.6%) of the teachers have attended a National Defense Language Institute. Only two states showed fewer than a fifth of their teachers with Institute experience: Pennsylvania (19.6%) and Ohio (17.2%). States with over 30%: Wyoming (30.8), Minnesota (31.2), Louisiana (34.5), Oklahoma (34.8), Utah (34.9), Nevada (38.1), New Hampshire (41.3), Montana (42.9), and North Dakota (52.4).

The national per cent for summer study aside from Institutes was 39.9. States where over half the teachers have had such study: Massachusetts (51.0%), Vermont (55.6), Indiana (57.3), District of Columbia (60.2), Maryland (64.4), and New Hampshire (68.8). States where fewer than a third of the teachers have had non-Institute summer training: Montana (33.1%), North Carolina (32.0), Kentucky (31.8), North Dakota (31.1), Arkansas (30.4), Louisiana (26.3), Idaho (25.4), South Carolina (23.7), West Virginia (19.6), and Utah (2.0).

Exactly half the MFL teachers have traveled in countries whose languages they teach. States where fewer than a third of the teachers have had this experience: West Virginia (31.3%), North Carolina (28.2), Maryland (27.6), South Carolina (26.0), and Arkansas (24.8). States where over two thirds of the teachers have traveled abroad: Massachusetts (66.8%), New Mexico (70.2), District of Columbia (74.2), Utah (75.4), and New Hampshire (84.9).

The national average for participation in other in-service training was 20.5%, with a range from Maryland's 62.4 and Montana's 52.0 down to Utah's 7.9 and Arkansas' 7.4. These four kinds of training (Institutes, other summer study, travel abroad, other in-service) complement one another; states that are low in

Table A: Public Schools

Estimates from Indiana did not account teachers in public and non-public schools. We have made an estimated separation in

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Table B: Non-Public Schools

Letters from Indiana did not separate teachers in public and non-public schools. We have made an estimated separation in most cases.

one kind of summer study may be high in one or more of the other types. Six states and the District of Columbia are above the national average in three of these four activities: Delaware, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming. And four other states are above average in all four types of training: Colorado, Indiana, Nevada, and New Hampshire. Much of the credit for this high degree of professional activity should go to the FL supervisors in these states.

A final group of questions involved participation in professional organizations. Nearly half the teachers (46.3%) belong to some FL organization, ranging from New Hampshire (72.2), Florida (65.5), Indiana (64.1), and Wyoming (63.1) down to West Virginia (26.8), Alaska (25.0), and Idaho (18.8). Over half the teachers (54.6%) attend FL conferences, ranging from New Hampshire (80.2%), Vermont (75.9), Oklahoma (75.7), and Indiana (74.4) down to Utah (7.9) and West Virginia (5.0). Over two thirds (68.2%) of the teachers read FL journals. Tops in this respect are Wisconsin (81.1%), North Carolina (82.9), and Indiana (88.0). In New Hampshire only one MFL teacher in three reads a professional journal; in Utah, fewer than one in four.

Table B gives data on the non-public secondary-school MFL teachers. The two tables are identical except that the numbers (though not the per cent) of teachers teaching two MFLs were so low as to make unreliable a study of the distribution of semester hours of preparation in the second MFL. For this reason

columns 14 to 17, which give this information for public-school teachers, have been omitted.

A comparison of the two tables shows a few significant differences between public- and non-public-school MFL teachers. The non-public-school teachers spent a smaller per cent of their teaching time in MFL classes (61.1% vs. 69.0%). Their average class is smaller (22.5 pupils vs. 26.2). They therefore have fewer MFL students (63.8 vs. 85.9). A somewhat smaller per cent has a bachelor's degree (95.7% vs. 99.2%) but an appreciably larger per cent has a master's degree (39.9% vs. 29.9%). The spread of semester hours in the principal MFL taught is greater, with 15.8% (vs. 11.3) having fewer than 17 hours and 48.2% (vs. 44.8) having more than 30. Non-public-school teachers have more years of teaching experience (9.8 vs. 7.7). Fewer of them have attended NDEA Institutes (15.1% vs. 25.6%), in part because they are not entitled to the weekly stipend offered to public-school teachers. But their higher degree of other summer study (51.6% vs. 39.9%) puts them slightly ahead on total summer training (66.7% vs. 65.5%). The two groups are very similar in amount of foreign travel (50.2% vs. 50.0%) but the non-public-school teachers are appreciably ahead in other in-service training (25.7% vs. 20.5%), which we have always thought of as an especially public-school activity. They attend fewer FL conferences than do public-school teachers (38.7% vs. 54.6), who may be more immediately involved with the FL section of the state Education Association.